

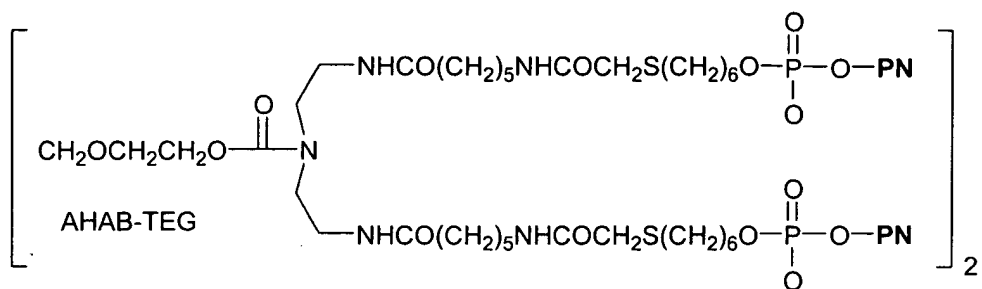
CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A method of treating systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) in an individual, comprising administering to the individual an effective amount of an agent which reduces anti-dsDNA antibody in the individual, wherein the administration of the agent results in a sustained reduction of anti-dsDNA antibody, wherein the sustained reduction is at least about 10% below baseline in the individual, and wherein the individual is human.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the agent comprises a dsDNA epitope which specifically binds to an anti-dsDNA antibody from the individual.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the dsDNA epitope is a polynucleotide.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the polynucleotide is DNA.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the agent comprises a conjugate comprising a carrier and one or more double stranded DNA (dsDNA) epitopes, wherein the double stranded DNA epitopes are polynucleotides.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the agent comprises a conjugate comprising a non-immunogenic valency platform molecule and two or more double stranded DNA (dsDNA) epitopes, wherein the double stranded DNA epitopes are polynucleotides.

7. The method of claim 5 or claim 6, wherein said polynucleotide comprises the sequence 5'-GTGTGTGTGTGTGTGTGT-3' and its complement.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the platform molecule is



wherein PN is the polynucleotide.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein apparent equilibrium dissociation constant (K_D') for the polynucleotide with respect to the antibody from the individual before or upon initiation of treatment is less than or equal to about 0.8 mg IgG per ml.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the sustained reduction is at least about 20% below baseline in the individual.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the sustained reduction is at least about 30% below baseline in the individual.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the sustained reduction is for at least about four months.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein the sustained reduction is for at least about one year.

14. A method of reducing risk of renal flare in an individual with systemic lupus erythematosus, comprising reducing the levels of anti-dsDNA antibodies in the individual by administering an effective amount of an agent which reduces anti-dsDNA antibody in the individual, and maintaining sustained reduction of the anti-dsDNA antibodies, wherein the sustained reduction is at least about 10% below baseline in the individual, and wherein the individual is human.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the agent comprises a dsDNA epitope which specifically binds to an anti-dsDNA antibody from the individual.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the dsDNA epitope is a polynucleotide.

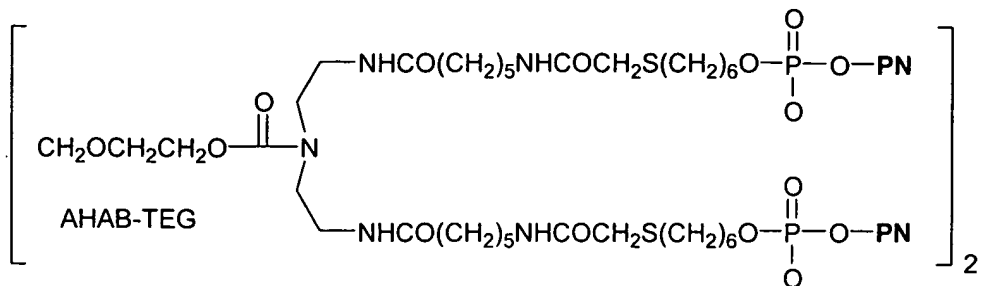
17. The method of claim 16, wherein the polynucleotide is DNA.

18. The method of claim 14, wherein the agent comprises a conjugate comprising a carrier and one or more double stranded DNA (dsDNA) epitopes, wherein the double stranded DNA epitopes are polynucleotides.

19. The method of claim 14, wherein the agent comprises a conjugate comprising a non-immunogenic valency platform molecule and two or more double stranded DNA (dsDNA) epitopes, wherein the double stranded DNA epitopes are polynucleotides.

20. The method of claim 18 or claim 19, wherein said polynucleotide comprises the sequence 5'-GTGTGTGTGTGTGTGTGTGT-3' and its complement.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the platform molecule is



wherein PN is the polynucleotide.

22. The method of claim 20, wherein apparent equilibrium dissociation constant (K_D') for the polynucleotide with respect to the antibody from the individual before or upon initiation of treatment is less than or equal to about 0.8 mg IgG per ml.

23. The method of claim 14, wherein the sustained reduction is at least about 20% below baseline in the individual.

24. The method of claim 14, wherein the sustained reduction is at least about 30% below baseline in the individual.

25. The method of claim 14, wherein the sustained reduction is for at least about four months.

26. The method of claim 14, wherein the sustained reduction is for at least about one year.